

Wedding and Blessing Ceremonies at Toorak Uniting Church





Welcome

Congratulations to you and your loved one! We are delighted you are interested in celebrating your wedding or blessing ceremony in our beautiful and historic church. We'll do everything possible to make your special day an amazing celebration of your love for one another.

We believe marriage is the freely given commitment made in public before God. It is intended to be the faithful, lifelong union of two people expressed in every part of their life together. In marriage, the two people seek to encourage and enrich each other through love and companionship.

We welcome all people irrespective of race, religion, political views, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, or age. Wherever you are on your faith journey, wherever you have come from and wherever you are going to; whatever you believe, whatever you do not believe, you are welcome here at Toorak Uniting Church. This Church welcomes marriages of interfaith, intercultural and LQBTQIA+ couples, as well as of divorced people and those with no religious affiliation.

The Wedding Ceremony

You may choose to use either our Minister or our Civil Celebrant. If you choose the Minister, the service will follow the Rites of the Uniting Church of Australia and variation in the content of the Service is welcomed. This may include alternative forms of the vows and personally chosen readings. You may also choose to bring your own Officiant and have the service in your preffered format.

Blessing Ceremonies

Many couples who have had a civil wedding decide they would like to dedicate their marriage to God in church soon afterwards. A couple can have their marriage blessed at Toorak Uniting Church, whether they were married in Australia or abroad. For couples who married abroad, it can be a way of including family and friends who were unable to travel for the legal wedding.

The Blessing Ceremony usually has a similar feel to a wedding with hymns, readings and flowers, or it can be an intimate, low key service. It acknowledges the commitment already made between the partners during a civil ceremony and asks for God's blessing and guidance in your life together.

Because it is not a wedding ceremony, there is no exchange of rings and no signing of the Register.

Viewing the Church

You are welcome to visit and view the church Monday to Friday 8:30am to 4:00pm, or to attend one of our Sunday services which start at 9:00am and 10:15am. For any other times, or if you would like a walkthrough, please contact the Church Office on 9829 0300.

Reserving and Booking the Church

It is very important to book the church as early as possible to ensure the availability of the date and time you require. You can make a tentative booking by ringing the Church Office, and this will be held for one month.

The booking will be confirmed upon receipt of the $1,000 non-refundable deposit and the completed booking form. The deposit will be applied to the balance of the wedding fees which are payable four weeks prior to your wedding.

The Church is not available for weddings in the first half of January, during the Easter weekend, or from December 24 - 26. On Sundays, the Church is available for weddings after 1:00pm.

What is the cost?

A wedding at Toorak Uniting Church costs $4,250. This includes:

The Minister
Hire of the church
Use of church vases, flower pedestals, cross and candelabra etc.
The Organist
Up to two Church Officers
Cleaning and resetting the Church after the ceremony
Administration costs including documentation and lodging of forms

A surcharge applies for public holidays.

The cost of weddings at TUC is a package – should you decide not to use some part of what we offer, the cost will not change.


161
409
473



Meeting your Officicant and legal requirements

A meeting will be arranged with the officiating Minister or Civil Celebrant to discuss details of your marriage ceremony and complete legal paperwork. Couples need to complete the *Notification of Intended Marriage* and other application forms no more than 6 months and no later than 32 days before your wedding. If there is any change of address after the form has been completed and before your wedding, you must notify the Church Office. Each partner must be at least 18 years of age at the date of marriage.

Australian citizens must bring an original of your full birth certificate (which includes the full names of parents) to the meeting along with a copy which we'll keep. For Australian permanent residents and people from overseas, a current overseas passport must be provided.

It is important that both original documents and a copy are produced. There must also be two people (both at least 18 years old) available on the day to sign as witnesses to the ceremony.

December weddings

Christmas is one of the two most important events in the Christian calendar. Toorak Uniting Church will have Christmas decorations in the church for the period covering Advent (the four Sundays prior to Christmas) until about a week after the New Year. These decorations reflect that we are an active Christian community, and cannot be removed.

Rehearsal

To ensure the wedding ceremony goes as smoothly as possible, it is important that all participants of the bridal party become familiar with their roles and responsibilities. Rehearsals are usually held on the Thursday prior to the wedding, however if you plan on having a large set-up, a rehearsal for the night before the wedding can be arranged with the Church Office.

Flowers

Toorak Uniting Church does not provide flowers. There are florists in the area which we can recommend. We can provide four white vases, each in the shape of an urn, along with pedestals.





Hymns and Music

The Minister will discuss hymns at your initial interview and an Organist is included in the cost of your wedding. Our resident Director of Music, Dylan Quinlan-Baskett, is a world-class musician who can play our exquisite pipe organ in the church. Organ music is a traditional favourite which will add grandeur to the occasion, or if you prefer something more modern, our Kawai semi-concert grand piano is also available for use.

For your service, Dylan can play the most popular wedding classics such as the Bridal Chorus, Wedding March, Trumpet Voluntary, Widor's Toccata, Pachelbel's Canon, Handel's Hornpipe and Vivaldi's Violin Concerto. If you prefer something a little different, you may arrange a meeting with Dylan to discuss your music choices. He can also arrange for a soloist to sing if required – this incurs a separate fee – or you can bring your own musicians or singers.

If you choose to have your own musicians, they will need to bring their own amplification equipment as the church sound system is designed for spoken word only. Our Church Officers can also play recorded music from your mobile device or a USB stick through the sound system. Please bring any recorded music for your wedding to the rehearsal so we can ensure it works prior to the ceremony.

Dance Classes

Everyone feels nervous about the bridal waltz – but there's no need to – our accomplished dance teachers can lead you through a range of steps to suit any couple. You'll learn and practise in a relaxed and private atmosphere. For further information, please contact Lin Cooper on 0408 310 714 or email dc@toorakuc.org.au.

Quick Questions

Can we hire the Church Hall or meeting rooms for refreshments after the ceremony?
Toorak Uniting has a large hall and a number of rooms for hire which are suitable for post-wedding gatherings and events. If you are interested in hiring our facilities, please contact the Church Office.

Do I need to be baptised in order to be married at Toorak Uniting Church?
No, though if you wish to be baptised, this can also be arranged on a separate occasion or at the wedding itself as has been done on previous occasions.

I am divorced. Can we still get married at Toorak Uniting Church?
Of course! Details of your previous marriage is required for the documentation we send to the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages.

How long is the ceremony?
Approximately 45 minutes, depending on the amount of music within the service, however it is best to allow a full hour.

Can we bring our own Officiant?
Yes, we allow ordained Ministers and authorised Australian Marriage Celebrants to use the Church, however the price we charge is the same as if the ceremony was being performed by one of our Ministers.

Can our guests throw petals/confetti/rice or have petals scattered down the aisle of the church?
No confetti, rice or petals may be used inside the Church. Natural petals only may be thrown outside on Church grounds.

Can we decorate the church or move the pews?
You can decorate the Church and the pews in the hour prior to your ceremony. All decorations must be easily attached, contain no adhesives, and must be removed immediately after the ceremony. This is a working Christian Church with an active worshipping congregation. The congregation hangs decorations in the church to celebrate Christmas and Easter and they cannot be moved. Pews may not be moved from their set position. Other items of furniture may not be brought into the Church without prior approval from the Chuch Office.

How long does it take to walk down the aisle?
The central aisle is approximately 14 metres long. The distance from the entry porch to the central aisle is approximately 4.5 metres. This information is to aid the wedding party to approximate the time it will take to travel the distance from the entry to the front of the church.

When can our florist/friends/musicians access the church?
The church is opened one and a half hours prior to your ceremony and is kept open for an hour after the ceremony. It is possible to have access at other times by arrangement.

How many people does the church seat?
The church can comfortably seat 300 people. With extra chairs it can seat a maximum of 400 people shoulder to shoulder, so please let us know if you're expecting more than 300.

Do you produce the Order of Service for us?
No, we will provide you with an electronic version of the service and you will need to create the Order of Service and have them printed yourself. Please remember to include the full text of each bible reading. If you have any questions about this, please ask the Minister.

What parking is available?
There are limited parking spaces on-site for your wedding party, photographers, florists and other vendors that may be required on the day. In addition to those spaces, there is ample room for wedding party vehicles at the front of the church, as well as up to three accessible parking spaces. There is also parking on our nearby side streets Irving Rd, St Georges Rd and Heyington Pl for your guests.

Many couples opt to have specialty vehicles (busses for guests, limousines, novelty cars) as a form of transport to and from their wedding ceremony. If you are organising such vehicles, please ensure you notify the Office at least one week prior to the event to arrange for parking.

Do we need to pay the Minister or give a gift?
No, all costs for the wedding are covered in the wedding fee.

Do we need to invite the Minister to the reception?
No, the Minister doesn't expect to be invited to the wedding reception, but feel free to do so if you wish.

Is flash photography allowed? Is it ok to video the ceremony?
Of course you may take photos or videos, however no flash photography or video lighting is allowed during the wedding ceremony. Flash photography and videos using lighting can be taken during the entry and exit processions and during the signing of the marriage register. Photographers must respect the nature of the service and abide by the Minister's instructions regarding access and movement in the church.





Toorak Uniting Church
603 Toorak Road, Toorak VIC 3142
9829 0300 office@toorakuc.org.au